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Report of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"*

Addendum

Proposed outcome document

III. Current challenges affecting the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action

28. The review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action occurred in a rapidly changing global context. Since 1995, a number of issues have gained prominence and acquired new dimensions which pose additional challenges to the full and accelerated implementation of the Platform in order to realize gender equality, development and peace by Governments, intergovernmental bodies, international organizations, the private sector and NGOs, as appropriate. **[Insufficient political commitment to gender equality at all levels still continues to hamper progress in implementing the Platform for Action.]**

29. The globalization process has, in some countries, resulted in policy shifts in favour of more open trade and financial flows, privatization of state-owned enterprises [and lower public spending/**changing roles of the public sector**]. This change has transformed patterns of production and accelerated technological advances in information and communication **[and affected the lives of women, including as workers and as consumers, and in some cases has increased inequality. The gender impact of changes aiming at a better balance between economic, employment and social policies and sustainable development has not yet been systematically monitored.]** Globalization has **[in various ways]** affected cultural values, life styles, advertising and the media. **Increased international integration as a result of globalization has also had cultural, political and social impacts.]** [Momentous political changes, including new forms of governance, **[growth of**

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international civil society] and more universal realization of human rights has accompanied these trends.]

[Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed. [creating/**This has led to]** wider economic disparities, **[further segregation in the labour market, atypical modes of employment, with the difficulty of enforcing labour standards] [the feminization of poverty,]** unsafe working environments and persistent **[exploitation of child labour,]** gender inequality, **[especially] [including]** in the **[formal and]** informal economy and rural **[sector/areas.]**

While globalization has brought greater economic opportunities and autonomy to some women, **[most of them**/others] have been marginalized owing to deepening **[inequities/inequalities]** among and within countries, depriving them from the benefits of this process. Although in many countries the level of participation of the female labour force has risen, **[in other cases, the application of certain economic policies have had a negative impact on employment of women, which]** [the increases in employment] **[often]** have not been matched by improvements in **[wages, promotions and]** working conditions **[or marked decreases in the level of women's poverty.]**

[In many cases, women continue to be employed in low paid, part-time, **[and contract]** jobs marked by insecurity and by safety and health hazards.] **[In many countries]** Women, **especially new entrants into the labour market,** continue to be among the first to lose jobs and the last to be rehired.]

30. Increasing disparities in the economic situation among and within countries, coupled with a growing economic interdependence and dependence of States on external factors, as well as the financial crises, have, in recent years, altered prospects of growth and caused economic instability in many countries, with a heavy impact on the lives of women. These have affected the ability of States to provide social protection and social security as well as funding for the implementation of the Platform for Action. **[Such difficulties are also reflected in the shift of the cost of social reproduction and other welfare provisions from the public sector to the household.]** [The decreasing levels of funding available through international cooperation has further marginalized and excluded most developing countries and many countries with economies in transition, within which women are amongst the poorest and most vulnerable.] **[The agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the GNP of developed countries for overall development assistance has not been achieved, although more, but not sufficient, funding has been allocated for women's programmes.] [These factors, combined with family disintegration, have contributed to the** increasing feminization of poverty, **which** has undermined efforts to achieve gender equality.] Limited funding at the State-level makes it imperative that innovative approaches to the allocation of existing resources be employed, not only by Governments but also by their partners in the NGO and private sectors. One such innovation is the gender analysis of public budgets that is emerging as an important tool for determining the differential impact of expenditures on women and men to help ensure equitable use of existing resources. This analysis is crucial to promote gender equality **[and ensures equitable use of existing resources.] [It is also imperative to give increased attention to strengthening the family and the traditional support systems it provides.]**

[30 bis. The negative consequences of globalization and structural adjustment programmes, high costs of external debt servicing and declining terms of international trade have worsened the existing obstacles to development, aggravating the feminization of poverty, particularly in the developing countries. In this context, the economic crisis that has hit several countries, has had a devastating impact on women and has further increased the feminization of poverty.] In some countries **[the application of/inappropriate design of structural adjustment policies has hit]/[economic reform policies have impacted on]** the education sector **[hard]**, since they resulted in declining investment in education infrastructure.

[Structural adjustment programmes have often meant budget cuts on basic social services, including education and health, aggravating illiteracy and maternal mortality of poor women./**Structural adjustment measures have, in some cases, led to budget cuts in basic social services, including education and health, impeding efforts to improve women's literacy and access to health care services.]**

30 ter. [There is a greater acceptance that the increasing debt burden faced by most developing countries is unsustainable and constitutes one of the

principal obstacles to achieving progress in people-centred sustainable development and poverty eradication. This, coupled with the burden of debt servicing, has hindered developing countries efforts to achieve economic growth and sustainable development and has adversely affected their ability to fully implement the Platform for Action.]

30 quater. [The unilateral coercive measures adopted by some countries against others, which are not in accordance with international law and the Charter, continue to be not only a serious obstacle, but also a challenge for the advancement of women in the affected countries. These measures have negative impacts on economic and social development and hinder the full enjoyment of all human rights, including the right of everyone to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being and the right to food, medical care and the necessary social services.] [Another major obstacle is the negative impact of economic sanctions on women and children.]

New 30 quater. [Economic sanctions against some countries continue to have negative impact and have adversely affected civilian populations, especially women and children.]

*30 quinquiens. In countries with economies in transition, women are bearing most of the hardships induced by the economic restructuring and are the first to lose jobs in times of recession. They are being squeezed out from fast growth sectors. Loss of childcare facilities due to elimination or privatization of state work places, increased need for older care without the corresponding facilities and continuing inequality of access to training for finding re-employment and to productive assets for entering or expanding businesses are current challenges facing women in these countries. **(AGREED)***

[30 sexiens. Women play a critical role in the family. The inadequate support to women and insufficient protection and support to the family in its various forms affects society as a whole and undermines efforts to achieve gender equality.]

31. Science and technology, as fundamental components of development, are transforming patterns of production, contributing to the creation of jobs and new job classifications and ways of working and contributing to the establishment of a knowledge-based society. Technological change can bring new opportunities for all women in all fields, if they have equal access and adequate training. Women should also be actively involved in the **[definition,]** design, development, implementation and gender impact evaluation of policies related to these [changes/new challenges]. Yet many women worldwide are effectively using new communications technologies for networking, advocacy, exchange of information, business education, [media consultation] and e-commerce initiatives. Nevertheless, **[many]** millions of the world's poorest women and men still do not have access to these facilities and are at risk of being excluded from this new field and the opportunities it presents.

32. The patterns of migratory flows of labour are changing. Women and girls are increasingly involved in **[many forms of]** internal, regional and international labour migration **[mainly in farm labour, domestic work and the entertainment industry]. [While this situation increases their earning opportunities and self-reliance, it also exposes women and children, especially girls, to inadequate working conditions, increased health risk, the risk of trafficking, [economic and sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, racism, xenophobia,]** and other forms of abuse, which **[impair their enjoyment of their human rights/ constitute violations of human rights, particularly for the poor, uneducated, unskilled and/or undocumented migrants] [Migration for labour often results in separation of women from their families and, in particular, from their children.]**

33. In recent years there have been developments towards establishing new, broad alliances and coalitions of Governments, trade unions, professional and consumer associations, employers foundations and NGOs within and across countries to promote human rights, codes of conduct, and socially responsible forms of investment **[that would include provisions for gender equality] [that reflects a gender equality perspective. There is scope for Governments to commit themselves to take additional steps and foster innovative approaches in close collaboration with civil society]**.

[Alternative: While recognizing that Governments have the primary responsibility to develop and implement policies to promote gender equality, partnerships between Governments and different actors of civil society are [increasingly recognized]

an important mechanism to achieve this goal. Additional innovative approaches can [be further developed to] foster this collaboration.]

34. Alternative: [Even though a number of countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, universal ratification has not been achieved. While there is an increasing acceptance of gender equality, many countries still have difficulties in implementing provisions contained therein.]

36. In some countries, current demographic trends, which show that lowered fertility rates increased life expectancy and lower mortality rates, have contributed to ageing of the population, and increase in chronic health conditions have implications for health care systems and spending, informal care systems and research. Given the gap between male and female life expectancy, the number of widows and older single women has increased considerably, **often leading to their social isolation and other social challenges.** Societies have much to gain from the knowledge and life experience of older women. **On the other hand, the current generation of young people is the largest in history. Adolescent girls and young women have particular needs which will require increasing attention. AGREED**

37. The **[rapid]** progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, **[particularly]** in the developing world has had a [strong] **[devastating]** impact on women. **[Gender equality is a prerequisite for its prevention, but the lack of recognition of the sexual and reproductive [health and reproductive] rights of women means that the prevention of HIV/AIDS is mainly in the hands of men, while girls and young women are particularly at risk./[made it an urgent public health and development issue. The virus is outstripping efforts to contain it and reversing hard-won gains of development. Infection rates are increasing among women and adolescent girls. In some regions and within particularly vulnerable groups, HIV infection in women, including youth is increasing rapidly.]** The burden of care for people living with HIV, including orphans, falls **[particularly]** on women, as State infrastructures are inadequate to respond to the challenges being posed. Women infected with HIV often suffer from discrimination and stigma **[and are often victims of gender based violence]**. Issues related to **[prevention, mutual responsibility,] [the provision of adequate education for prevention of HIV/AIDS,]** mother-to-child transmission **[of HIV]**, breastfeeding, [abortion], **[information and education of youth, [curbing high risk behaviour], [negotiating safe sex], women in prostitution, intravenous drug users, support groups, voluntary counselling and testing,]** partner notification and provision of essential drugs, including [azidothymidine (AZT)], **[drugs for opportunistic infections,]** have not been sufficiently addressed. **[There is also the need for more effective approaches to change of behaviour and to the empowerment of women to demand safe sex and take full control of their sexual relations. There are positive signs in the fight against HIV/AIDS in some countries that behavioural changes have occurred among young people and experience shows that educational programmes directed to young people on sexuality and HIV/AIDS can lead to a more positive view on gender relations, delayed sexual initiation and reduced risk of sexually transmitted diseases.]**

37. bis. Growing drug and substance abuse among young women and girls, both in developed and developing countries, has raised the need for increased efforts towards demand reduction and fight against illicit production, supply and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. AGREED

38. The increase in casualties and damage caused by natural disasters has raised awareness of the inefficiencies and inadequacies of the existing approaches and intervention methods in responding to such emergency situations, in which women, more often than men, are burdened with the responsibility of meeting the immediate daily needs of their families. This situation has raised awareness that a gender perspective must be incorporated whenever disaster prevention, mitigation and recovery strategies are being developed and implemented. AGREED

41. [Increasing acceptance of gender equality has emerged, based on a [shared set of] [universally accepted] principles, norms, rules and institutional mechanisms and [also] on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol.] [alternative: Increasing acceptance of gender equality has emerged, based on a shared set of principles, norms, rules and institutional mechanisms and international law, including, in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol.]

[The changing context of gender relations, as well as the discussion on gender equality [and sexual and reproductive rights,] [productive and reproductive roles] [sexual and reproductive health], has led to increased reassessment of gender roles. This has further encouraged a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of women and men in working towards gender equality and the need for changing [the stereotypical] [and] [traditional] roles [which limit women's full potential] and [identities] [behaviour] of women and men.]

[There is a need for balanced participation between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work.] [Failure to recognize [measure the real value of] the unremunerated work of women has meant that women's full contribution to [development]/[society and the economy] remains underestimated. This leads to a continued disproportionate burden for women in the household/As long as there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities with men, the combination of remunerated work and care-giving, there will be continued disproportionate burden for women in comparison to men. There is a need to measure women's unremunerated work in quantitative terms and to value it in national accounts.]

[In some countries there has been a recognition of the importance of a balanced participation of women and men, both in remunerated work and in professional life, and of the involvement of men in the process of gender equality in a perspective of social change.] [The changing context of gender relations, as well as the International Conference on Population and Development and Fourth World Conference on Women commitments to promote and protect gender equality and women's rights has made clear that women and men must work together to realize gender equality. This has further encouraged a discussion on the importance of taking the situation, and position, of both women and men into consideration when working towards gender equality. The knowledge of how unequal gender relations in different spheres is produced and reproduced has given important input into how policy, programmes and projects can be focused towards the root causes of gender discrimination.]